

Update all contact information with BCS

As franchise tax season approaches, the Secretary of State Business and Commercial Services division reminds all registered entities to update contact information.

All entities required to pay franchise taxes will soon receive their 2009 franchise tax reports.

The 2009 annual report not only allows the entity to file the legally required franchise tax, but also allows filers to update officer, member and manager information; registered agent name and address, and any tax contact changes. This saves the business entity the time and money it would cost to complete and file amendments and/or change of agent forms.

The 2009 Franchise Tax Report must be electronically filed at www.sos.arkansas.gov or postmarked by the United States Postal Service by midnight May 1, 2009. Postage meter "postmarks" are not acceptable.

If you have not received a tax form by April 1, it is your responsibility to contact the Business and Commercial Services Division to request the necessary form. All report forms are also available online.

If a tax contact's address changes, it is very important to update this information with the BCS division. This allows BCS to maintain accurate corporate records and

inform corporate entities of changes in laws affecting those entities.

The tax contact address may be any address where corporate forms and information will be received in a timely manner. A street address or post office box may be used for this update. The tax contact information is non-public information and will not appear on our website.

If the recipient of this newsletter is the tax contact for your business, no update is necessary.

All nonprofit entities registered with the Secretary of State must submit an annual report on or before August 1. This report allows nonprofits to update business entity information with no filing fee. It is crucial that each nonprofit corporation verify that BCS still has the entity on file with accurate contact information.

Notaries public are also required to keep current mailing address information on file. If the notary relocates to another county, the notary's county of commission must be updated. The appropriate forms can be found online at www.sos.arkansas.gov by choosing Notary Public under the Business and Commercial Services section of the webpage.

Profile of a service: apostilles for international use

Even though the state of Arkansas is deep inside the United States, our interaction with foreign governments has continued to increase through the years.

Foreign companies operating in the state, mission trips to developing countries, students studying abroad, couples adopting babies and recent immigrants dealing with their home governments all require the use of documents issued, recorded or notarized by Arkansas officials.

These activities require foreign governments to determine the authenticity of the related documents. To facilitate the acceptance of these documents they must be authenticated or certified, a process made simpler with apostilles and authentication certificates issued in Arkansas by the Secretary of State's office.



Secretary of State Charlie Daniels

We are proud to launch our spring 2009 schedule of activities in the Business & Commercial Services Division of the Secretary of State's Office. We anticipate much involvement from business owners and private citizens alike.

Our Spring Notary Education Tour will travel to 20 cities across Arkansas, free of charge, beginning March 4 and continuing through June 10. If your city is not listed on the scheduled tour (and you have 10 or more people interested in taking a notary class) just call our office and we will be happy to bring a class to you.

The month of May is consumed with the collection of franchise tax. Reporting deadline is May 1. Businesses can file quickly and easily online at www.sos.arkansas.gov or mail in their forms.

Starting a business often produces many, many questions. These questions can be answered in person by the Small Business Administration (SBA) and SCORE who will set up shop outside our BCS office twice a week to answer questions from potential

(See LETTER, page 2)

BCS continues partnership with SBA, SCORE to aid entrepreneurs

The Secretary of State understands that starting a business can be a daunting task. To help guide entrepreneurs in the right direction, we've partnered with the United States Small Business Administration (SBA) and SCORE for over a year.

Both the SBA and SCORE will have representatives set up outside the Business and Commercial Services office regularly to provide free business assistance to address your concerns, refer you to the appropriate resources and help start you in the right direction.

The offices of SBA and SCORE both offer free assistance for small businesses.

SCORE will have a representative at the Secretary of State's office on the following dates in 2009 from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.:

March: 6, 13, 20, and 27

April: 3, 10, 17, and 24

May: 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29

June: 5, 12, 19, and 26

July: 10

August: 7

September: 11

October: 2

November: 6

December: 4

The Small Business Administration will have a representative at our office

on the following dates in 2009 from 10 a.m. to noon:

March: 12 and 26

April: 9 and 23

May: 7 and 21

June: 11 and 25

July: 9 and 23

August: 13 and 27

September: 10 and 24

October: 8 and 22

November: 12

December: 10

APOSTILLE, continued from page 1

Prior to the introduction of apostille certificates, the burden on international courts and authorities to judge foreign documents as authentic was quite considerable. On October 5, 1961, the Hague Convention abolished the requirement of legalization for foreign public documents.

This action began to eliminate the confusion of legalizing documents by instituting the apostille. This certificate is issued by the authorities of the state where the document originates and follows a standardized format. The apostille is attached to the document, dated, numbered and registered. Registration can be verified by a simple request to the authority that issued the certificate.

Since October 15, 1981, the United States has been part of the 1961 Hague Convention.

Documents destined for use in participating countries and their territories should be certified by one of the officials in the jurisdiction where the document was executed. In Arkansas, the Secretary of State is authorized by the U.S. Department of State to issue apostilles. A document that has

an apostille attached is entitled to recognition in the country of intended use. No additional certification by an authentications office, embassy or consulate of the foreign country is required.

The uses of apostilles are very specific and detailed in the Hague agreement. Its use is monitored by the U.S. Department of State. The State Department recently noted that the apostille is not appropriate "if the document is intended for use in the U.S. or in a country not party to the Hague Legalization Convention."

The apostille *only* validates the state official recording or notarizing the document, not the document itself.

When requesting an apostille from the Arkansas Secretary of State, one must provide the original document or certified copy along with a \$10 fee per document requiring authentication.

Certifications can be issued for documents destined for any country or territory that is not a party to the Hague Convention. This certificate indicates that the notary public who notarized the document is a duly commissioned notary of the state of Arkansas and has the authority to act as such.

Certifications can be obtained from the Arkansas Secretary of State's office by submitting the original document or certified copy along with a \$5 fee per document to be authenticated.

The Arkansas Secretary of State's office issued 3,366 apostilles and certifications over the past year. For more information you may want to visit the following web sites:

Hague Convention: www.hcch.net

U.S. State Department: www.state.gov

Arkansas Secretary of State:

www.sos.arkansas.gov

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business owners. The success of this combined venture from last year led us to continue this program. The schedule is listed above.

We will have a complete list of 2009 Corporate Legislative changes for your review in our next newsletter. I welcome hearing from business constituents on ways we can better serve you. If you have questions or concerns, let us know by e-mailing corporations@sos.arkansas.gov or calling 501-682-3409 or toll-free 1-888-233-0325.



NOTARY CORNER

Free notary education classes to tour state again

BCS is again touring the state to provide free notary public education. We begin in March and go through April, traveling around the state. Classes in our Little Rock office continue through June.

Check the schedule at right to see when we'll be in your area. Required registration is available online at www.sos.arkansas.gov, by e-mailing jarrod.johnson@sos.arkansas.gov, or by calling 501-682-3409 or toll free 888-233-0325.

Electronic registrations will be confirmed by e-mail, which will include location information and other details.

March

- 4 – Rogers, 3 p.m.
- 5 – Fayetteville, 10:30 a.m.
- 9 – Harrison, 3 p.m.
- 10 – Marshall 9 a.m.
- Clinton 2 p.m.
- 11 – Little Rock 9 a.m.
- Little Rock 1 p.m.
- 16 – Stuttgart 9 a.m.
- Pine Bluff 1:30 p.m.
- 26 – Mena 1 p.m.
- 27 – Hot Springs 9 a.m.
- Arkadelphia 1:30 p.m.
- 30 – El Dorado 3 p.m.
- 31 – Texarkana 9 a.m.

April

- 8 – Little Rock 9 a.m.
- Little Rock 1 p.m.
- 9 – Jonesboro 1 p.m.
- 10 – West Memphis 9 a.m.
- Wynne 1 p.m.
- 13 – Fort Smith 3 p.m.
- 14 – Russellville 9 a.m.
- Conway 1 p.m.
- 23 – Tontitown 3 p.m.
- 24 – Fayetteville 10 a.m.

May

- 13 – Little Rock 9 a.m.
- Little Rock 1 p.m.

June

- 10 – Little Rock 9 a.m.
- Little Rock 1 p.m.

Payment Voucher Arkansas Franchise Tax Reporting Year 2009

Name: ABC Company

Amount Due: \$150.00

Filing #: 10112999

Federal ID #: 111111111

Pay online at <http://www.ark.org/franchise/index.php>
Mail payment check to:
Arkansas Secretary of State
P.O. Box 8014
Little Rock, AR 72203

SAMPLE

Officer signature (if mailing payment)

Pay online at www.sos.arkansas.gov. If paying by mail, detach, sign and return this portion with your payment.

If you receive the above notice by mail, please do not mistake it as an advertisement.

Entities whose accountants or tax preparers choose to file clients' annual reports online using our Batch Filing

system will receive notice by e-mail or U.S. mail that their payment of franchise tax is due by May 1, 2009.

This year we will again use the filing coupon shown above. The form will be placed in a letterhead envelope marked

"Franchise Tax" with a pre-addressed envelope for convenience in returning the coupon with payment.

The tax payment can also be made online at www.sos.arkansas.gov, using the information on the coupon.

2009 Annual Franchise Tax Reporting

File electronically today

Charlie Daniels
Arkansas Secretary of State
Business and Commercial
Services Division

Deadline: May 1, 2009

Prepare and update your 2009 franchise tax report
online at www.sos.arkansas.gov

Arkansas Secretary of State

If you choose to file by paper and need help
obtaining a form, please contact the Business
and Commercial Services Division.

Phone: 501-682-3409
Toll Free: 888-233-0325
Web: www.sos.arkansas.gov



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